

and communal hunting parties; popular tales about the Virgin's miracles; and piles of bleached bones.

Ultimately, this diverse repertoire enables Eiss to make one of his most important interventions—the elaboration of an “ethnography of history.” Thus, he demonstrates that, even in the absence of a collective memory or shared history of Hunucmá, there are patterned aspects of its communal experience that are given narrative form, that are sedimented in the form of allegory into coherent and mutually intelligible ways of relating el pueblo's multiple pasts.

This is a volume that makes demands on its readers and some may find the juxtaposition of chronological and thematic sections a bit jarring. But a careful reading pays rich dividends.

Gilbert M. Joseph

Yale University

MAGALI M. CARRERA: *Traveling from New Spain to Mexico: Mapping Practices of Nineteenth-Century Mexico*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011.

In an 1835 publication, Mexican statesman and historian Carlos María de Bustamante asked three critical questions of his still formative nation, floundering in the aftermath of Spanish colonization: “¿Quienes somos? ¿de donde venimos? ¿para donde caminamos?” In her important contribution to both cartographic scholarship and to the discipline of art history, Magali Carrera finds the most significant answers to these ponderous queries in the form of the 1885 *Atlas pintoresco é histórico de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos* by Antonio García Cubas, a multi-talented governmental agent in the Ministry of Development. As Carrera demonstrates in her complex and engaging book, García Cubas's polished pictorial album—whose pages framed maps of the nation with lithographic views of its human and cultural components—did not materialize in a vacuum but rather drew from a long and fascinating history of image production related to the description and identification of the place ultimately known as the United States of Mexico.

Carrera's rich arc of art history starts in the sixteenth century, when Europeans began to use maps and other imagery to make visible for themselves a profile of the broader American hemisphere: this included atlases with depictions of a personified America as semi-naked and otherwise barbarous, as well as the documentation of native flora and fauna portrayed as alternately marvelous and degenerate. Thus also began the cartographic and visual construction of what

was then New Spain, a place most clearly defined among Europeans by Spain's colonial regime, whose mappings of both the spatial and cultural kind more clearly served the administrative and political interests of the Spanish elite. For instance, the eighteenth-century Mexican genre of *casta* paintings, which focuses on social stratification based on race and was the subject of Carrera's first book, is characterized here as "a form of eyewitness accounts that stages a display of the imagined geography of New Spain" (p. 59).

Still more significant to Carrera's visual survey are a number of early nineteenth-century travel accounts laden with images which would later be adapted by García Cubas. Chief among them were reports by Prussian traveler Alexander von Humboldt, whose detailed charts, graphs, maps and illustrations based on a single year's visit to New Spain seems to have presented the clearest model for a comprehensive profile of a place. In fact, Carrera argues, these kinds of accounts modeled the wide circulation of a fabricated Mexico based on aggregate and often exaggerated or exoticized imagery whose neat packaging distracted from their constructed nature and successfully silenced omissions. García Cubas's efforts are finally situated within the context of the nineteenth-century Mexican political scene, wherein public figures actively grappled with how to best publicly configure and display national identity—a task fueled with particular urgency after the loss to the United States of over half of its territory in 1848.

Starting in the 1950s, geographer and cartographer García Cubas produced well over a dozen publications, often combining texts and images; this included individual maps, entire atlas projects, as well as several lengthy statistical and geographical books, both for local use and in translation for export. Of particular note is *The Republic of Mexico in 1876*, which he created for an English-speaking audience, clearly stating his intention to combat negative and false views of Mexico and its people by outsiders. In fact, the work exposes a common cultural racism that had by then replaced a colonial legal designation of race among the Mexican governing elite; he appropriates the United States' expansionist rhetoric of manifest destiny to visualize and otherwise describe the inevitable decline of the Indian race and the optimism that indigenous bodies may be converted into "a more favorable character." Thus in this and his other earlier works are evident the foundations of García Cubas's own practice of erasure and fabrication of Mexican identity that would come to ultimate fruition in his later magnum opus.

In the book's culminating chapter, García Cubas's *Átlas pintoresco é histórico*, an elegant and oversized volume, is located within the governing structure of the Porfiriato, when state projects were rigorously sustained by the rhetoric of visual power. The atlas does not include a written text but rather each of its thirteen pages is centered on a thematic map framed by lithographic imagery, much of which is derived from centuries of preceding art history. Carrera is the

first scholar to explore the atlas's tightly integrated visual narrative structure; it becomes clear that such an analysis is only possible as a result of the complex inventory of Mexican visual culture in previous chapters. *Atlas*'s large, centralized maps assure that all aspects of visual history and culture are unified and dominated by national space. Carrera thus demonstrates how *Atlas pintoresco é historic* served generally as a propagandistic and commercial product and more pointedly, how it displays, in sleek packaging, a series of picturesque itineraries through a real and imagined Mexico for the armchair traveler. One question that remains ambiguous is exactly who in fact that viewer was and how he may have gotten his hands on a copy of the atlas.

While Carrera's theoretically-rigorous study is densely packed with information and analysis, it nonetheless remains accessible. Not only does her book provide a complex analysis of nineteenth-century Mexican visual culture but it also stands as an excellent model for art history's engagement with cartographic studies, and vice versa. Indeed the problematic divide in scholarly discourse between mapping and the visual arts seems increasingly unsustainable in light of growing academic interest in the digital humanities; although hers does not itself participate in that particular discourse, this study does provide a light for those scholars considering the dynamic relationship between spatial and visual production and practices. By engaging the broader nineteenth-century "scopic regime," for instance, Carrera's contribution is able to build on and expand the lessons of Raymond Craib's excellent but more strictly historical *Cartographic Mexico* (2004).

Perhaps because Carrera delivers such an engaging narrative, it is hard to imagine how many of García Cubas's later works were produced during the same historical moment that artist José Guadalupe Posada was creating a very different visual realm for everyday Mexicans. With Porfirio Díaz's dictatorship in full swing, Posada's famed penny prints were motivated by the very social injustices and urban instabilities that were silenced by governmental productions like *Atlas pintoresco é historico*. Since his lithographs traveled through the streets of Aguascalientes, Guanajuato and ultimately Mexico City, Posada's efforts to disseminate a broad popular vision might have constituted an authentic foil for García Cubas's much more formal works. Particularly in light of her careful discussion of the development of new modes of image production and circulation of the period, it is a surprising omission that this prolific printmaker is not named a single time in the text. This small critique aside, Carrera's book is indeed an exciting contribution to the growing interdisciplinary literature on Mexico.

Delia Cosentino

DePaul University